

[3 May, 2007]

RAJYA SABHA

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The Government is providing various fiscal incentives for setting up of biomass power projects in the country including in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal such as concessional customs duty on import of machineries and components, excise duty exemption, accelerated depreciation on major components, relief from taxes and term loan from Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA), besides project capacity based capital subsidy. This apart, policies have been introduced in potential States for wheeling, banking and buy-back of electricity generated from commercial biomass power and bagasse regeneration projects.

(f) Does not arise.

Gas as a fuel

2973. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state.

(a) whether it is a fact that gas now accounts for about 24 per cent of the total primary energy consumption, globally, but in India the share of gas is 8 per cent and it may take years to get anywhere close to global levels,

(b) whether it is also a fact that no electricity capacity addition is planned in the Twelfth Five Year Plan based on gas as a fuel, despite its attractiveness as a fuel source due to its availability, price and environment impact; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to promote the use of gas as a fuel?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE): (a) According to the report of the Working Group on Petroleum and Natural Gas for the 11th Plan, the utilization of gas, as fuel in India, accounts for around 9% of the primary needs in comparison to that of 24% of total global primary energy supply.

(b) and (c) The Working Group of Power for 11th Plan has recommended a tentative capacity addition of 82,200 MW in 12th Plan, comprising of

.30,000 MW hydro, 12,000 MW nuclear and balance 40,000 MW from thermal which may also include gas projects subject to availability of gas at reasonable price. Although gas is a relatively clean fuel, at present there is uncertainty about the availability, period of availability and price of **gas**. The 12th plan projects have not been finalized so far.

Rural electrification in West Bengal

†2974. SHRI SAMAN PATHAK; Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state

(a) the number of villages included under the Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana in West Bengal.

(b) the details thereof; district-wise; and

(c) whether Government would make any special arrangement for hilly and remote areas where there is no facility of electricity?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE): (a) and (b) Rural Electrification Corporation Limited (REC) has received 32 projects for 18 districts in West Bengal under Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGVY). In Phase-I of the scheme, funds for 13 projects have been released. District-wise details are given in the Statement (See below).

(c) All the villages including hilly ones, where grid connectivity is feasible and cost effective, are covered under RGGVY. Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) has a separate programme for electrification of remote villages. As per proviso-4 of Clause 3 of Rural Electrification Policy, all States have to prepare and notify a Rural Electrification Plan by February, 2007 wherein, *inter alia*, they need to mention the remote villages where grid connectivity is either not feasible or not cost effective. West Bengal Government has not so far notified the Rural Electrification Plan. Secretary, Ministry of Power has also written to Chief Secretary, West Bengal on 19.03.2007 in this behalf.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.